



Keep the Emerald City Green

2011

Four Years into the Urban Forest Management Plan

Community Tree Planting and Education Programs

Seattle's urban forest is an important element of our city's infrastructure and delivers numerous environmental, social, and economic benefits to the city and its residents. The Comprehensive Plan and the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) call for an increase in canopy cover. To meet these goals, the City has identified residential zones (both single and multi-family) as primary targets for canopy increase because these areas make up 67% of the city. The effort to increase tree planting in residential zones has previously been implemented through ad-hoc programs in multiple departments, staffed by temporary employees, and without dedicated funding.

In a 2009 report on the management of city trees, the Office of City Auditor recommended the creation of a full-time position to implement education and outreach activities for the UFMP. During the 2010 budget process, City Council developed a Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI) directing the Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE) to provide a range of options for Council to consider regarding the administration of the City's tree planting and education programs that directly involve the public.

In 2011 OSE convened an interdepartmental team to review existing community tree planting programs and analyze City departments' assets and competencies. The team recommended Seattle reLeaf as the optimal program to administer, coordinate, and consolidate the City's community tree planting and outreach efforts. The recommendation included the creation of a new, full-time position to reside in Seattle Public Utilities to staff the reLeaf program and continuing to advance the UFMP canopy cover goals.

This recommendation to implement public tree planting and educational programs in a single department will result in administrative efficiency and effectiveness; provide the highest level of technical expertise and educational outreach to the community; improve long-term tree survival via education and outreach; and maximize grant funds and direct services available to the

public. The program will be funded by General Fund, Seattle City Light, and Seattle Public Utilities.

The Urban Forestry Commission and the Urban Forest Interdepartmental Team Work Together

In October, the Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) and the City's Urban Forest Interdepartmental team (IDT) had a productive work session. During the meeting the groups identified major topics to address in the 2012 Urban Forest Management Plan update process; agreed on ways in which the UFC and IDT can work together to advance UFMP goals; and provided an opportunity to network and build rapport between UFC and IDT members.

The table in the next two pages provides a detailed summary of the Urban Forest Management Plan goals and progress to date.



Seattle Urban Forest Management Plan 2011 Progress Report

Goal	Objective (Lead Department)	Accomplishments
TREE RESOURCE		
Manage trees to promote health and longevity	Continue restoration on 590 acres of forested parkland. Begin restoration on an additional 80 acres (Parks)	112 new acres added to restoration, 320 acres maintained through contractors and 709 volunteer events
	Maintain trees on developed parkland on an 18-year cycle. 2,000 trees/year maintained. Inspect 500 trees for risk (Parks)	Maintained 1,800 trees (below target due to budget cuts) and inspected 400 trees
	Maintain Seattle Department of Transportation-managed trees on a 14-year cycle. 3,000 trees/year maintained with Bridging the Gap levy (SDOT)	Pruned 3,369 trees as part of the Bridging Gap levy goals
	Prune trees away from power lines along 600 miles of electrical distribution for safety and reliability (SCL)	Pruned 605 miles of electrical distribution lines for safety and reliability
Increase canopy cover and environmental benefits	<u>Trees planted and maintained by the City:</u>	
	Department of Parks and Recreation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant 400 trees in developed parks Meet 2 for 1 tree replacement policy 	Planted 581 trees and removed 350 trees 2 for 1 tree replacement policy not met
	Department of Transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant 800 street trees with Bridging the Gap levy funding Plant trees as component of capital projects and preserve and protect existing trees Meet 2 for 1 tree replacement policy 	Planted 816 street trees as part of Bridging the Gap; planted 131 trees as part of capital projects; and removed 120 trees Exceeded 2 for 1 tree replacement policy
	Seattle Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace trees removed at the Theater Commons and new projects on campus Complete final portion of 2007-08 tree replacement plan Meet 2 for 1 tree replacement policy 	Planted 12 trees in Nob Hill project; removed 24 trees (18 in Chihuly Garden and Glass project, 4 in Nob Hill, and two on Reader Board). Planting of 36 trees to fulfill 2 for 1 policy will take place in 2012
	<u>Trees planted and maintained by residents:</u>	
	Seattle City Light <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist community members to plant 200 trees through the Urban Tree Replacement Program (UTRP) Meet 2 for 1 tree replacement policy 	Planted 94 trees as part of Urban Tree Replacement program and 375 as part of Trees for Neighborhoods program. Removed 240 trees, 53 of which were hazard trees. 2 for 1 tree replacement policy short by 11 trees
	Office of Sustainability and Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist community members in areas with low canopy cover to plant and care for 800 trees through the Trees for Neighborhoods program 	Planted 1,000 trees with 333 people (375 trees were funded by Seattle City Light and 525 trees were funded by Seattle Public Utilities).
City-wide tree planting total: 2,634 City-wide tree removals total: 734 Net gain (loss): 1,900 (Citywide 2 for 1 policy met)		

Goal	Objective (Lead Department)	Accomplishments
MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK		
Improve management of trees on private property and ROW through incentives & regulations	<u>Right-of-Way:</u> Adopt updated street tree codes to strengthen regulations related to maintenance of privately maintained trees in the right-of-way. (SDOT)	Revised draft street tree ordinance, briefed the Mayor, and began public comment process.
	<u>Private Property:</u> Adopt permanent tree protection regulatory framework for private property during and outside of development . (DPD)	Major and Council decided to resume work on this issue in 2012.
Track Urban Forest Management Plan Implementation	Monitor Urban Forest Management Plan performance and issue an annual report. (OSE)	UFMP is on track. OSE issued UFMP Progress Report. Staff will update the UFMP next year.
Implement resource management tools	Complete i-Tree survey of all plots, analyze, and publicize report (OSE)	Data gathered. Report expected in March 2012.
	Develop citywide tree care metrics and reports on the long-term impacts on trees. (SDOT)	SDOT established and achieved goal of pruning 2,000 trees proactively for health and vigor.
	Integrate Tree Crew work into Parks work load management system. (Parks)	Tree crews began integration of work metrics.
	Assess vegetation management at City Light to identify opportunities to improve tree management; continue to coordinate on annual revisions to street tree list; update ROW vegetation management plan. (SCL/SDOT)	SDOT/SCL reached agreement on appropriate trees to plant under power lines; updated street tree list to ensure appropriate tree planting under power lines; and updated Vegetation Management Plan.
Facilitate inter-departmental cooperation	Convene Urban Forest interdepartmental team monthly. (OSE)	Urban Forest IDT met monthly.
	Identify opportunities for better coordination and efficiencies in managing ROW trees. (SDOT/SCL)	SDOT/SCL staff met monthly to discuss and resolve issues and coordinate management.
COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK		
Enhance awareness of the urban forest as a community resource	Support community awareness and engagement foundation necessary to meet canopy goal (reLeaf - OSE) Develop collaborative strategy with non-profit partners to increase community awareness of the value of trees and proper tree planting and care (OSE/Parks/SDOT)	<u>reLeaf:</u> Managed reLeaf website; produced outreach and education materials; staffed Ask the Expert on website. <u>Urban Orchards:</u> secured grant funding, recruited 30 volunteers to maintain existing fruit trees in 5 orchards. <u>Tree Ambassador:</u> Recruited 20 Tree Ambassadors in seven neighborhoods. Produced neighborhood plans and began implementing projects.
	Develop an urban forest curriculum to raise awareness of school children of the benefits of trees (Parks)	Supported 28,000 hours of youth volunteerism and held one GSP K-12 program.
Increase community engagement in urban forest management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit and manage 95,000 hours of volunteer support through the Green Seattle Partnership. Support over 20,000 hours of youth employment programs to work at restoration sites. Create paid youth crews internal to Parks. Provide K-12 program to 15 schools. Expand Forest Steward community restoration leader program. Hold two 7-session training programs and increase training scope. (Parks) 	Gathered 68,000 volunteer hours at 720 volunteer events across the city; supported 23,000 hours of youth employment at restoration sites; developed two youth green teams with non-profit partners; developed a youth employment program in partnership with Goodwill; added 20 leaders to Forest Stewards leader program; and held 15 Forest Stewards trainings with expansion into monitoring protocols as well as new forest certification program.
	Staff the Urban Forest Commission. (OSE)	Staffed Urban Forestry Commission.
	Support neighborhood groups applying for grants to plant trees or install landscapes. Develop program to include volunteers in tree planting activities during Arbor Day (SDOT)	Supported neighborhood groups applying for grants. Partnered with non-profit "Earth Gay" and 50 volunteers to conduct cleanup of SE section of Lake Union shoreline as part of Arbor Day.



New Tree Ambassador Program

reLeaf's Tree Ambassador program recruited its first cohort in 2011 with 20 people in seven neighborhood teams. The goal of the Tree Ambassador program is to empower residents to become stewards of the urban forest and serve as resources for their local community.

The Tree Ambassador program is part of the Green Seattle Partnership in conjunction with Forterra (Cascade Land Conservancy), and is funded by a grant from the U.S. Forest Service.



Training workshops for the new Ambassadors took place from April to June. By the end of the year the teams had finished their neighborhood plans and had begun to implement projects including mulching, weeding, and caring for 113 street trees on 27th Avenue between Yesler and Cherry; developing a mobile application for a Tree Walk around Greenlake Park; and talking about the importance of conifers to the community at social events.



2011 Trees for Neighborhoods

The 2011 Trees for Neighborhoods program was a great success! The program provided 1,000 trees to residents of the City of Seattle for planting in their yards and planting strips.

Altogether, the program gave out 75 fruit trees, 400 small trees, and 525 medium to large trees to 333 program participants. Of the 525 medium and large trees, 40% went to addresses on the south side of Seattle, and 27% went to addresses in Northwest Seattle and Ballard, areas with lower existing canopy cover. Program outreach was targeted to these neighborhoods to support the Urban Forest Management Plan goals for canopy cover. 135 of the trees distributed were approved by Seattle Department of Transportation arborists for planting as street trees at 75 residences throughout the City.

The program held two workshops to show participants how to properly plant and care for their young trees. Program participants received free watering bags, coupons for free compost, and educational materials providing information about tree planting and care.

As part of ongoing program support, past participants were mailed watering instructions and reminder magnets in the spring. 2009 participants were also invited to a pruning workshop to learn structural pruning to reduce future safety hazards.

"Absolutely fabulous program. Allowed me to plant three trees that I would not have been able to do, due to the cost of trees and lack of education as to which ones to plant. This program solved all my challenges."

2011 Program participant

